

Tom Horne
Superintendent

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY PASSES \$150 MILLION PERMANENT PAY RAISE FOR EDUCATORS

PHOENIX (Wednesday, February 22, 2006) -- The House Education Committee this morning, by a unanimous vote of 9-0, passed a \$150 million permanent raise for educators. Proposed by State Superintendent Tom Horne, and sponsored by Education Chairman Mark Anderson and Representative Tom O'Halleran, the bill would provide funds to school districts to provide a permanent raise of \$2,500 for each educator.

Horne stated, "We have been working hard on accountability. We are holding our schools accountable and teachers accountable. We have added a new videotaped assessment in which all teachers will have to demonstrate efficiency in teaching in six years, or leave teaching. All of this will lead to increased student learning. But we must do something on the positive side to retain our highly qualified teachers and attract more talented people into teaching."

The bill applies to all educators statewide as defined in Proposition 301 and requires that the raise be given in equal amounts of \$2,500 for each educator.

Horne originally proposed a \$2,500 tax credit which would have been the equivalent of a \$3,500 pretax pay raise. When that failed to attract sufficient political support he proposed to substitute a permanent pay raise.

"With a budget surplus that is \$600 million more than anticipated last year, \$150 million is reasonable to request for raises for educators," Horne added.

"It is gratifying that both Republicans and Democrats supported this raise. This vote will be a major boost to achieving a substantial raise for our educators as the budget process proceeds," Horne stated.

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